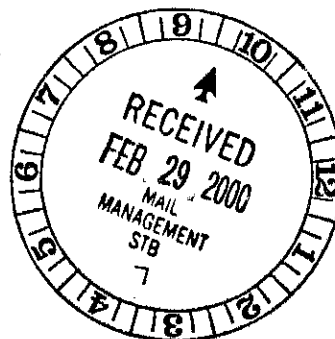


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CN – BNSF March 8/2000 Special Hearing



Mr. Vernon A. Williams, Secretary
Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
Attn: STB Ex Parte No. 582
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001



Office of the Secretary

FEB 29 2000

Public Record

Mr. Jim Guinivan
Harkins Cunningham
801 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20004-6142
Telefax 202-973-7610

Feb.28, 2000

Dear Sirs:

Stora Enso is one of the largest producers of Newsprint and Printing papers worldwide. Volumes sold in the North American marketplace exceeds 1 million tons annually, of which a large portion is handled by CSXT, NS, WC, CN and BNSF.

Our Hands-On knowledge of recent mergers lead us to be cautious, specifically with regards to service. During the last merger, merging railroads did not accept responsibility for failures. Their ability to implement action plans to recover from these failures were very weak. They also did not accept financial responsibility for these service failures.

Recent developments or comments from competing railroads opposing the CN/BNSF merger may be directed at derailing the process for reasons other than the STB assessing this merger on its merits. In our opinion TIMING is not the issue. Service delivery, customers and consumers benefits by having transportation carriers being more efficient and effective and having a lower cost base thereby allowing customers to maintain a competitive cost base is the real issue. The failures of previous mergers may be a result of poor planning with regards to infrastructure, staff levels, duality of tracks, and regarding technology i.e.: incompatible computer systems.

StoraEnso will continue to carefully evaluate the benefits and negatives of this merger, however, we do feel that the STB needs to maintain its focus on the strength of the application.

Sincerely,

Sten-Åke Norling
Director of Logistics, North America

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